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Quaint  Historic Markers
and Inscriptions of
Lebanon County

PAPER READ BEFORE THE LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL

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By REV. P. C. CROLL, D.D., LEBANON, PA.

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Quaint and Historic Markers and Inscriptions of Lebanon County.

BY REV. P. C. CROLL, D. D.

The province of local history includes every fact and circumstance that has signally or characteristically contributed to a community's life. Wherever such facts have left their imprints, or footprints, upon the sands of time, there is found the trail of the historian. These footprints are usually looked for in the story of the community's settlements, in the account of its architecture, in its church, educational and civic developments, in the war history or some unusual industrial enterprise of such local community. It may also be traced along its genealogical or biographical lines or be written around its rural village centers or municipal unfoldings.

I prefer, today, to follow a new trail and see what may be learned from Lebanon County's past and present by studying certain lines of memorials, or imprints, former generations have left for this later generation to know them by. As one may gain certain definite knowledge concerning savage life by its stone utensils and other relics, its totem marks, or its belts of wampum, or necklaces or beads; or as Eugene Field, in one of his poems, speaks of the sticky and greasy finger-marks, left by children, on the wall or upon some stair case, saying:

"These are the marks by which you know
Pitty-pat and Tippy-toe."

so we trace the mind and wishes of our forebears in the markers and inscriptions they have left us. In them we see

their first attempts at a community's recorded history. There may be such private accounts as birth and baptismal records and other family memorabilia kept in the Family Bible, or some last will and testament, or deed of land, carefully sealed up in some envelope with a signet ring, but these are private records for the most part. When a community begins to set up markers for the public good, and engraves or imprints, upon them some information or legend for the general welfare (*pro bono publico*), then we have the community's first landmarks and footprints of history. Thus we come naturally to the study of the markers and inscriptions of other days.

About the first trace that is left of the pioneer's intrusion into an uninhabited region is the imprint of his foot upon the virgin soil or the blazing mark of his hatchet left upon some tree, or trees, in the primeval forest. The former becomes obliterated by the rains or snows and other changes of the weather, while the latter becomes a permanent trail for his successor to follow, or for himself to retrace his steps. This blazing of a foot-path through a thick-grown forest, becomes the first engineer's line for the establishment of a bridle-path, which eventually leads to the building of a public highway. No sooner are highways and public roads laid out in a new and sparsely settled country, than some system of road markers or sign-boards is adopted and established to guide the wayfarer in his course of travel. Hence this leads me to my first class, or division, of our county's markers, viz :

I. OUR PUBLIC ROADS' SIGN BOARDS.

It stands to reason that when first public roads are laid out in a new settlement they are built to connect the older with the newer community, and as the new community develops nuclei of hamlet or village and town centers, these are connected by a net work of public roads. In the older portions of our country, and especially in Pennsylvania, these roads followed natural lines rather than mechanical. Streams and mountains in a hilly country modify the course of a road as they fixed somewhat the location of village centers. Hence roads are not always straight, due north and south, or east

and west, as they are mechanically laid out in the Middle-western States, where the land is level and regular and where roads and boundaries were first laid out on paper, then on *terra firma*, by the general government before the actual settler sets foot upon the soil

Not so in Pennsylvania. The great King's highways were built in Colonial times in the wake of the pioneer settler. As he pushed into the interior of Penn's great woods, the proprietor's official agencies came on the settler's heels with a great road leading as directly as the contour of the country allowed from the capital city of Philadelphia to the heart of this new settlement. Often these roads were quite circuitous, but such were the first roads on the map of Lebanon County's territory. Then, as local necessities required and new centers of population sprung up, these first roads were made to branch out from this stem road, like the branches of a tree branch out from its trunk, to be finally interlaced into the net-work of public roads we now find upon our map.

It would be interesting to make a study of the history of road building in a given county—as this could easily be done from the records of petitions and plots preserved in our Court Record, but as this is not our purpose now, we shall confine ourself to the chosen subject, leaving this for other hands to carry out.*

As soon, therefore, as Lebanon County began to be settled public roads began to be opened and built and at the partings or intersections of these roads it was found a wise and useful thing to set up sign boards giving the direction and distance between the chief settlements, or establishments, of churches, businesses, or industries, so that the plainest and simplest wayfarer might not err in his way. The idea is not an American or modern one, for we read of such sign boards as early as the Jewish settlements in Canaan, where conspicu-

*See "Roads and Highways in Eastern Penn'a," by Hon. Theo. B. Klein, Vol. II p. 255.

ous guide-posts would direct the unfortunate shedder of blood as a fugitive from vengeance to the nearest city of refuge. Probably they were in use long before.

No man can comfortably or successfully travel without knowing the way. And to be dependent upon dwellers by the way, or fellow travellers, whom one may chance to overtake or pass on the highway for such information, is not always safe and reliable, or else may expose one to the ridicule, the insult, the abuse, if not the ignorance, of such as we may chance to accost for our information. An instance comes to the recollection of the writer by way of illustration, which occurred in his native county of Lehigh. A well-spruced country swain, who ventured forth on a certain Saturday evening about dusk to go afoot for a few miles walk into an unfamiliar section of his neighborhood, where he chanced to know a certain charming lassie, then had her home, after making a number of turns in the road and, having to decide between the parting of ways several times, began to have his misgivings as to the correctness of his choice, decided to assure himself by asking the first person he chanced to meet or reach. Coming presently to a farm house he decided to stop and ask. Just as he approached he noticed the farmer at some annoying work on the premises, whom he approached so bashfully, quietly and unobservedly that their meeting was embarrassing to both and in consequence somewhat exasperating to the gruff old farmer.

"Is des der weg wo will ich hie?" interrogated the timid, embarrassed youth.

The farmer, whose sudden surprise found him unguarded in temper and speech, and who took in the situation at a glance, yet without perfect self control, grimly replied.

"Ei, du verblendes Kalb, wo wit dann hie?"

"Ei, an—an—ans—ans Pitty Schnecke zu de maed," stammered out the abashed youth.

"Jah! dann folg jusht deiner Naas; darno werst du bal hie komme!" promptly replied the vexed farmer; whereupon

the timid young suitor bowed himself unceremoniously out of his presence and pursued more fleetly his unexplored way.

Another instance comes to mind, which is said to have occurred upon our own Lebanon County heath, which well illustrated the danger of depending on fellow-travellers for information regarding distance or road-directions. It is related of one of the most active, honored and venerable members of this body, the genial and learned Lutheran bishop of our neighboring town to the east, that driving along a country road one day he passed several plain and innocent looking children and, desiring to have a little friendly chat with them, he halted in his carriage and began to address the children with the simple interrogation: "Guter Morgen, ihr Kinner! Kennt ihr mir saage ob des der recht weg is noch Wolleberstaedtle?"

• Presently one of them took courage to reply, in part declamatory, part interrogatory style: "Du bist der Parre Schantz. Und du wit de Leut der weg noch em Himmel sage, un'-wast 'n net noch Wolleberstaedtle?"

The possible embarrassment of both instances, we maintain, is sufficient proof of the uses of sign boards, which cannot talk back, no matter what we may say to them, and which yet yield us usually the desired information.

The form of these silent informants is usually one, or several, boards, of from three to five feet long and six inches to a foot wide, affixed with pegs or nails to a post, usually placed at the parting or intersection of the roads. They have usually painted upon their faces the names of the several towns or villages (sometimes a church, store or mill) lying in near-by or remote distances along either line of travel from this given point. Either a carved or printed hand, with index finger pointing the direction and the number of miles distant a certain place is situated, tells the whole story a stranger or other way farer needs and is seeking. And this is usually correct unless some mischievous wag or some blundering supervisor has reversed the direction of the board.

Concerning the Lebanon County sign-boards it may be said that probably two alterations have been made in many instances since the first were set up. They have been changed from the German to the English tongue, and in most of the earlier instances they have dropped the old nomenclature of our country villages for the newer naming. Thus these boards do no longer point the way "NACH STREITZE!" "NACH TULPEHOCKENTOWN," or "HEIDELBERGTOWN," or "STUMPSTOWN," or "WILLIAMSBURG," or "WOLLEBERSTAEDTLE," or "MILLERSTAEDTLE," but they direct one "TO LEBANON," "MYERSTOWN," "SCHAEFFERSTOWN," "FREDERICKSBURG," "JONESTOWN" and "ANNVILLE," &c.

It would be interesting for the study of varied orthography to have a list of all the more ancient sign-boards that have adorned the high ways of Lebanon County, but this is now impossible. Yet it must be remarked in passing that no class of literature or information is usually permitted to flaunt its bad spelling so long and insultingly into the midday light of public schools and general enlightenment as our cross roads sign-boards. Even to this bright day, well on in the twentieth century, these errors have not all been corrected. Their occurrence is attributable to the common, earlier illiterateness of rural supervisors, whose business it was to set them up; to the variableness in spelling proper names, and to the tenacity with which the Penn'a-German dialect clings to our rural districts in Eastern Pennsylvania, whose German sounds do not always give a clue to a name's English orthography. One of the most conspicuous instances of this class of deficiencies was an index-board, standing until recently at the forking of a road in North Lebanon Township with the following inscription:

TO PEINT GROEFFE ~~to~~ • (TO PINE GROVE ~~to~~)

Other instances were, one in South Lebanon Township pointing out

1 MILE TO PUR-HOUSE ~~to~~

Another

5 MAEL TO LEBANON

Another

2 MILES TO ROYER'S METE HOUSE

Another, said to have been nailed to an oak in a thick forest which stood 50 years ago mid-way between this city and Schaefferstown, had this in rude capitals:

TO NEIBEIDER HORS TOK FER
NICOL BECER

May this not have stood for:

TO HEIDELBERGER HORSE DOCTOR
NICHOLAS BECKER

Not as bad as a sign-board in Lehigh County pointing the way to "A Mot'se," meaning "E'maus."

Of the hundreds of sign-boards doing daily service in their silent, uncomplaining way, despite the bitter cold of winter or the frying heat of summer, despite the storms of wind and shafts of lightning, and subject to the abuses of the sportsman and the school boy—the one using it for a target, the other for a tablet for his drawing pencil or jack-knife.—none of our county's sign-boards, it seems to me, have done a mere yeomanlike service than the one which until quite recent stood a few miles east of Fredericksburg and pointed the disciples of Horace Greely and the hosts of west-ward ho! emigrants who took this great Easton road for their destination, for a century or more—

TO OHIO

II. TURN PIKE MILE-STONES

Next to road sign boards, and leading naturally to their consideration, come our turn pike mile-stones. These are a distinct class of markers from the former. Their object, while also giving direction, is rather to give distance and enable the traveller to see how far he has already travelled and has yet to travel to reach his destination.

We have three turn pikes traversing our county territory, the Berks and Dauphin, the Horse-shoe and the Cornwall pikes. All of these have mile stones, regularly set up at exact intervals of one mile apart. The Cornwall pike, lying wholly within the county limits, and but five miles long, has only six of these markers, (granite stones) alike in form, set along the road-side and protruding about two and a-half to three feet above the surface, with two bevelled faces upon which are carved the initial letters of the two terminal towns, Cornwall and Lebanon, with the changing number of miles each is distant from either termini. This being the most modern of the three, its mile-stones have not the marks of age or quaintness one may find in the others.

The Berks and Dauphin turn pike must have no less than twenty of these markers within our county borders, this being the length of miles it traverses, and they have about them the marks of ages. There are specimens of both of them within our city limits—that of the former pike stands at the corner of Tenth and Chestnut streets, and that of the latter at Ninth and Cumberland streets, next the Lebanon National bank building. The following sketches represent them:

| | | |
|---------|------|-----|
| | REA | HAR |
| | 27 | 24 |
| C: 5 L. | | |
| M. | | |
| | PHIL | HUM |
| | 79 | 15 |

Similar mile stones mark the old Horse-shoe-pike, of which at least nigh a dozen may yet be seen along its course within county limits.

Another line of ancient mile stones marks a road leading through Schaefferstown and Millcreek Valley.

III. COUNTY LINE STONES.

Closely akin in character, yet wholly different in purpose to these turn-pike mile stones, are our County line stones. They are markers placed along all our main highways that cross into adjoining counties, indicating where these boundaries are actually fixed. Thus we find that we are surrounded on all sides by a coral of line stones, like a string of beads about the neck of a fair maiden, only that these are oft mud-bespattered by the wheels that revolve past them, to be washed again by Nature's tears in its frequent and oft copious rain showers. As we are enviroined by the four Counties of Berks, Lancaster, Dauphin and Schuylkill, these line stones partake of this quadrupled variety in the outward or off side lettering, which they do contain. The history of these stones is dating back a half a century when set up by authority of the State. The one marking the County line, which crosses the Berks and Dauphin turn-pike, about one eighth of a mile east of the Tulpehocken Reformed church, is a little more elaborate in its inscription, reading thus :

Lebanon County

A. E. Hibshman of
Lebanon Co.

George Schoch of
Berks Co.

Tobias Kreitzer of
Schuylkill Co.

Surveying Commissioners.

Israel Ferrett

Reuben Kreiter

Chain Carriers

Isaac Person

John Weike Assistants.

Appointed by Act of Assembly
March 22, 1855.

The reverse side is the same, except that the name of "BERKS" displaces that of "LEBANON"

IV. HOUSE DATE-STONES.

The most interesting and instructive class of markers, however, are the date-stones, which our forbears frequently had set within the walls of their dwellings, or other buildings, at the time of their erection. They are especially interesting because they are quite ancient, because they convey their own history—bearing usually the names of its builders and the time of the house's erection, together, frequently, with some motto, legend or pious sentiment—and because they thus become mute, yet eloquent, witnesses of the character, thrift and vicissitudes of the early settlers of this fair valley.

We are comparatively rich in the character and variety of this class of markers, and I shall attempt to bring together here as many as is possible of these date-stones with their inscriptions, hoping that others may assist in exhausting the entire list before this paper appear in print.

Beginning, therefore, at our eastern border and working westward through both the Tulpehocken and Millcreek Valleys we find the following houses still standing, marked with these characteristic date stones. The first one we meet standing close to our eastern borders, about midway between Sheridan and Newmanstown, is the celebrated Zeller house or fort. The dwelling is a well-sized stone structure, a story and a-half high, whose apartments and thrilling history during the early Indian disturbances of this settlement and its associations in a rich family and religious history, has been frequently told and is more fully given in the writer's work on the "Ancient Landmarks of the Lebanon Valley." Its date-stone informs us that it was erected in 1745 by Heinrich Zeller, a prominent citizen and large landowner of that early Colonial period. It is a solid and well preserved edifice, used as a fortification during the French and Indian war troubles and, from present appearances, able to well serve in like capacity for many years to come. The date stone is near the lintel of the door-way, which is itself constructed of huge and wide sand-stone slabs with considerable ornamentation carved upon it. The slab bearing name and date has elaborate carving besides the following.

HEINRICH ZELLER

17   45

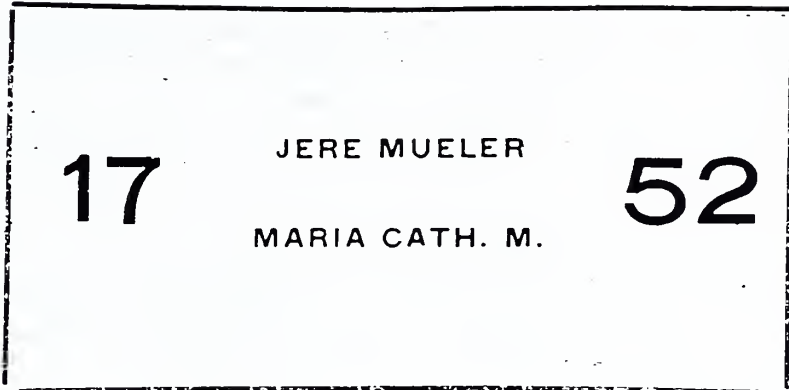
We must refer the hearer, or reader, elsewhere for the interesting history of this rich architectural landmark and proceed to speak of the next marked house on our route westward up the Millcreek Valley.

Very close to the county line, between Stouchsburg and Sheridan, but still in Lebanon County, stands the Groff homestead, until recently occupied by the late George L. Groff, Esq., and his sister, decendants of Andreas Groff, which house is marked by two sand stone markers, as follows:

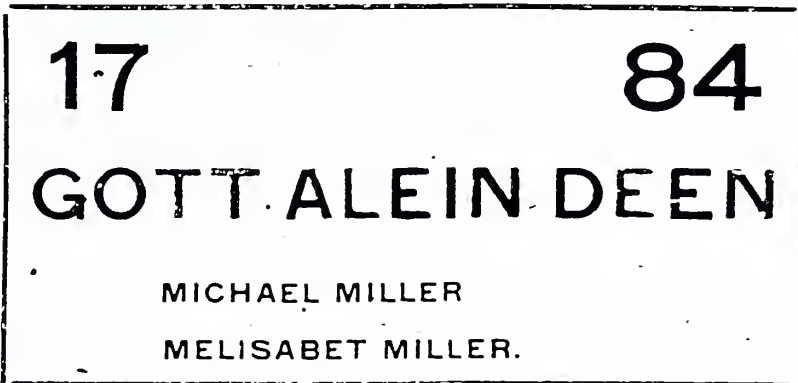
A. G. 1764.

The lettering is antique and the figure 7 is an evidence of a none too closely-developed observation-bump in the builder and his masonic artist.

Up the Millcreek Valley are several buildings still showing these ancient mural markers. Right at the edge of the hamlet, known as Millcreek Center, stands the old Mueller residence and mill property. Both are now the property of the estate of the late Mr. E. R. Illig, who occupied the former as his residence and conducted the milling business in the latter edifice quite close by. The house is a fine and substantially built stone structure, where red sand stone and limestone are so used as to be of elegant effect. Walls are massive, its three stories are covered with a broken or hipped Dutch roof, and its interior is handsomely finished in hardwoods and provided with roomy and convenient apartments; the doors, stair case, Queen Anne mantle-piece and fireplace bespeak age and elegant taste and substantiality. It bears in its walls a stone-marker with the following inscription:



The mill property also has a marker which reads thus :



If the original lettering has not been altered, and this expresses indeed the sentiment of the builder, it must certainly be admired as a pious sentiment to put into the grinding and wealth-producing machinery of a grist mill. While serving the miller's neighbors as an early *Kunne-Muhl* in grinding their grist, it was to serve God also. Possibly the builder thought of devoting part or all of its earnings to God in conformity to some titling vow like the patriarch Jacob of the Old Testament; or perhaps he had risen to the high New Testament ground of religious doctrine and faith as to hold that he serves God best who serves most faithfully his fellow men.

In our day mills are built to serve self rather than God or fellow-men. But sometimes, like our large corporation mills or our Insurance mills, these have become the "mills of the gods" which though "grinding slowly," have been made under an awakened and aroused public sentiment "to grind exceedingly fine" for the chief millers.

Our opinion, however, is that the lettering has been slightly altered in an attempt possibly to restore a fading epigraph. "*Gott allein die Ehr*" is a much more common sentiment, yet would mean nearly or substantially the same as the former interpretation.

There must be at least several old houses with inscribed and dated markers left in the several dales of the Millcreek Valley, as there are abounding in this region quite a number of this character of ancient and substantial stone houses. We wish a transcript of all such might be made, but we are prepared to give but one or two more. The first is that of the Becker homestead, located about a-half a mile east of Kleinfeltersville. It is a large, commodious, reddish sand-stone dwelling house, its date-stone indicating that it was erected in

1770

Its spacious yard is fenced in by a stone-posted fence, the one having the gate swing on being an inscription, as follows.

17 G. 67
B.

indicating that George Becker erected it 139 years ago. Here, in 1803, Bishop Jacob Albright called together the first conference of religious followers, which gave birth to the Evangelical Association in the household of religious denominations. The large room, in which the first Conference was held, is still intact, as when some twenty-five devout men held a two days' session of mutual conference and prayer, resulting in the setting apart of their leader, as Superintendent or Bishop of the organization a century ago. Here were held also the third and fourth annual Conferences of this denomination, and at a son's house, nearer the village of Kleinfeltersville, is where the Bishop died on May 18, 1808, after a brief illness. He was buried in a neighboring churchyard, and a memorial church was erected about forty years ago on the premises at the edge of the village.

Turning northward at this point toward Myerstown one finds about two miles south of the latter place the Spangler homestead, never having passed out of the family hands. The house in question was erected by Jacob and Elizabeth Spangler, and bears the following quaintly engraved date stone:

GOTT . GESEGNE . DIESES . HAUS . UND
 WER . DA . GETT . EIN . UND . AUS . ICH . GE
 AUS . ODER . EIN . SO . STET . DER . DOTT
 UND . WARTET . MEIN . . 17-82.

JACOB - SPENGLER . C . E . S . B . S . P . R . N .

Just to the east of Myerstown, where the Owl Creek is crossed by the Berks and Dauphin turn pike, stands another fine Revolutionary architectural relic in the shape of one of those well-built, commodious and symmetrical lime-stone

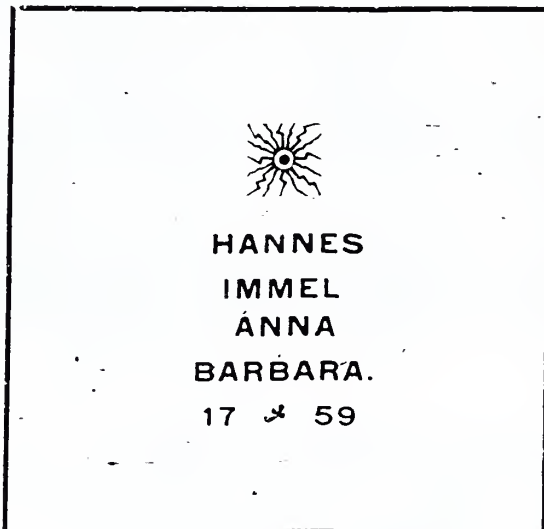
country homesteads that were the fashion of the wealthier class of Penn'a-German farmers in that Colonial period. It bears a stone containing the following inscription:

GOTT . GESEGNE . DIE-
SES . HAUS . WER . DA . GET
EIN . UND . AUS . 1777 .
PETR . LEN . EFA . LENIN .

In Myerstown itself are a few marked or noted buildings, one being the founder's, Isaac Myer's home, where small apartments on the garret are still pointed out as the quarters of its illustrious proprietor's colored slaves in the days of slavery in Pennsylvania. But its three-foot-thick stone walls bear no other marks or insignia. On the main street of the town, and occupied by Dr. Kline, still stands the house in which J. Andrew Schultze, afterwards the popular Governor of Pennsylvania for two terms, lived and conducted a small store business in his earlier days. On the rear premises of this lot stands a stone stable that to this day bears the Governor's initials in a date stone, thus:

J. A. S.
1808.

About a mile and a-half west of the borough and on the banks of the Tulpephocken Creek stands the ancient Immel homestead—the home of a once honored and celebrated family. It is a beautiful specimen of Colonial architecture, both in its exterior and interior. Here it is that the Governor just alluded to found a wife in his youth. Its front elevation contains a marked ornamented stone with this inscription upon it:



A little farther up stream, where the beautiful Tulpephocken has its rise in a large and copiously flowing spring, stands the Ley homestead, perhaps the best kept house and grounds in all the county that have descended to us from Colonial days. It had for some time been occupied by Mr. Samuel Urich and his family. It is a handsome specimen of that early architecture, and has the distinction of having entertained, in 1793, President George Washington and his travel companions, David Rittenhouse, the astronomer; Robert Morris, the financier, and Tench Francis, Esq., the attor-

ney of the Penna. Estates, who were the guests of Michael Lei, an old Captain in Washington's Revolutionary Army. The house is marked by two sand-stone markers, with ornamented engravings, thus :

GOTT GESEGNE
 DIESES . HAUS . UND
 ALLES . WAS . DA . CED
 EIN QD 1769 ER AUS.
 MICHAEL LEI.

O MENSCH
 GEDE NCK
 DER ETST EN STUN
 ENA MAGDALE
 17 NA LEI-IN 69

Another house, standing near the narrows, north of the turn-pike, has an anvil shaped date-stone in its gable wall, reading thus :

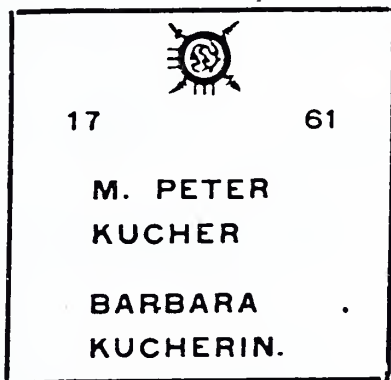
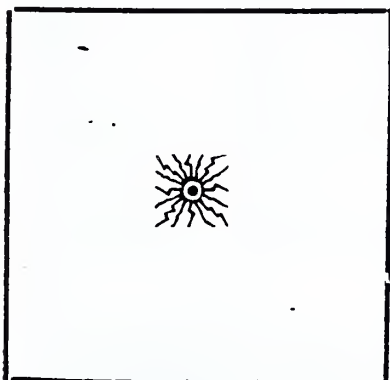
M. T.
 1744

which is interpreted to stand for Michael Tice.

A very fine specimen of this mural marking and inscription is found in the old church architecture of this city, notably the Moravian, Reformed and Lutheran churches of

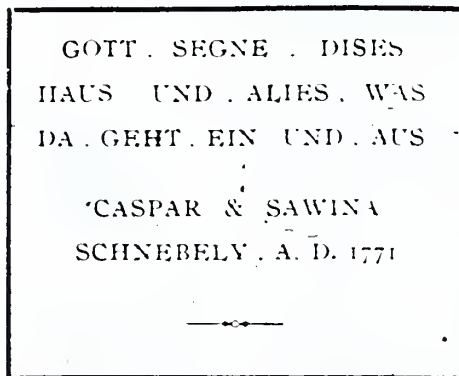
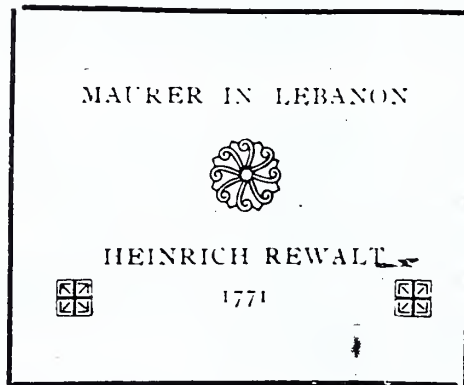
this city. The first of these edifices, formerly located at the suburb of Hebron, has been razed a few years ago, but the other two, Tabor Reformed and Salem Lutheran churches, are still with us, proud specimens of these architectural century plants, blooming and bearing fruit. They both bear on the streetward sides a line of engraved entablatures, but which we will not transcribe for this purpose. They are mostly Biblical text inscriptions.

There stood, until recently, a fine Colonial stone mansion to the east of our city, now destroyed, and the ground occupied by the American Iron & Steel Company, which had the usual markers. It was the old Kucher homestead, and once entertained the famous General Peter Muhlenberg as guest for several days, and often took into its hospitable, spacious embrace the bishops and learned itinerants of the Moravian church, to which denomination its occupant devoutly adhered. When this eighteenth century building fell a prey to the commercialism of the twentieth its date-stones were rescued and may now be seen at the residence of the late Col. John W. Mish. They read as follows:



Within the heart of the city, on South Ninth street, and

constituting the present American House—a popular hotel, is another specimen, in fine preservation of these early marked homesteads. Its mural markers reads as follows :



Another fine, well preserved specimen may still be found in the Orth homestead on the Horse shoe pike—some distance west of Bismarck. It was probably the birth place of the late Hon. Godlove S. Orth, of Indiana, and National fame. The date-stone reads thus :

GOT . SEGENE . DIESES . HAUS .
 & ALLES . WAS . DA . GET . EIN &
 AUS: GOT . ALEIN . DIE . EHR &
 SONST . KEINEM . ANTERN . MER.

ADAM & CATHARINA . ORTS.

I ✠ 7 . (I M. Y.) 6 ✠ 2

Travelling westward down the Quittapahilla Creek we find another few of these mural-marked homesteads. At Sunny-side, one of the Rev. John Caspar Stoever's sons, after serving in the Revolutionary war, built his fine stone mansion upon the ancient Stoever memorial estate along this smooth-flowing, Indian-named stream. He marked the house with two inscribed tablets, placed high up in its front elevation, which read as follows ..

Gott Bessegne
 dieses Haus and
 wer geht da ein
 und aus!

Johannes Stoever
 Angenes Stoeverin

1795.



Friede sei in
 Diesem Haus
 und mit Dehnen
 Welche Drauss.

Dieses Haus
 Erbaut ist

Anno. 1795.

This house is now occupied by a relative, Mr. Henry S. Heilman, a prominent member of this body, and besides serving the ordinary uses of a residence contains a pipe organ, which the present owner had built within for his own delight and edification, and also holds the largest collection of rare old German-American publications to be found in this part of the State. The same owner is also in possession of the older Stoeber property—a mill property, where lived for forty years and died in 1779 the pioneer Lutheran preacher of these parts—the Rev. J. Caspar Stoeber. But as this property has no marker, we pass it by with this simple allusion.

Following the flow of the lazily-winding, meadow-loving Quittapahilla we pass mills and homes that hold interesting history, but few or insignificant markers characterize them as good specimens for our present purpose. When we come to the town of Anville, however, we have to turn to the north for half a mile to find a rare specimen of the class of marked homesteads here brought together. It is the old Ulrich homestead, late the Steinmetz property, where, before the French and Indian wars (which at one time beat in terrific storm about this spot), the earliest Ulrich ancestor had built his stone fortification in the form of a residence and house of refuge for his neighbors over a perennial spring. The foundations of the original house and the refuge cellar are still preserved in the more modern dwelling house now occupying the spot. So is the stone, which had been used as the door sill of the old fort and cautiously engraved as a warning to all who passed the threshold in those perilous times, preserved in the present building, set in one of the porch-pillars. But the same legend has been preserved in more legible form, together with the names of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Steinmetz, in a newly engraved tablet set in the front elevation of the modern house, which preserves to us the legend of warning, when these gravel slopes formed the fighting line of the English nation and her American colonies against the French power and its allied Indian fighters. It reads as follows:

“SO OFT DIE THUER DEN ANKEL WENDT,
O MENCH, DEIN END BEDENK ! 1751.

which translate I means: “As oft as this door turns on its hinges, remember, O man, thine end!”

Another house in Annville, marked by a date-stone, is that of the Biever homestead, on South White Oak street. It shows that it was built by John D. Biever, Sr., in 1814. Doubtless more specimens could be found in following down the Quittapahilla valley to its mouth, but they are not known to the writer.

Along the two branches of the Swatara and on either side of its united course, as it meanders through the northern portion of our County's territory, there must exist quite a number of date-marked old homes, but we are enabled to give but a few. The first one is the fine residence of the late William G. Heilman, located about a mile north of the Swatara, from the village of Greble, or midway between it and Hamlin and its historic, and in legal history, notorious churches. Here stood, until fire destroyed it upon a Christmas night about thirteen years ago last Christmas, the old Heilman homestead. The two date stones were preserved from the conflagration and set in the new building, which is a handsome rural mansion. One is found in the front elevation and the other in the gable-end wall. They read as follows:

GOT . GESEGNE . DIESES . HAUS
 UND . WAS . DA . GET . EIN . UND . AUS
 GOT . ALEIN . DIE . EHR
 UND . SONSTEM . KEINEM . MER.

1770 AN D.

WER . GOT . VERTRAUT HAT .
 WOHL . GEBAUT .
 IM . HIMMEL . UND . AUF . ERDEN .
 WER . SICH . VERLEIT .
 AUF . IESUM . CHRIST .
 DEM . MUS . DER . HIMMEL . WERDEN .

JACOB [1770 ANNO D.] MARGREDA
 HEILMAN.

In Heilman Dale, on the farm of our esteemed Secretary,
 Dr. S. P. Heilman, stands a building with a stone-marker in
 its wall, reading as follows :

This Paper-Mill
 was built by Adam
 and Catharine Heilman

1793.

There has been set over this county—as is being rapidly done in all thickly-settled parts of our great country—a system of marking residences by the name of its head occupant appearing on small tin or zinc boxes, set upon posts, which is Uncle Sam's device to assist in the *Rural Free Delivery* of U. S. mail to all his rural dwellers. It must be a great blessing to all dwellers of the rural districts, a saving of time, a means of daily communication with the outside world and centers of activity of light, and the same time prove a source of satisfaction to the inquisitive traveller in enabling him to know, at least the names of persons whose homes he passes, to have this system of free rural mail delivery adopted by this county. If the naming of these rural delivery mail-boxes is not displaced by their numbering, it would even assist eager suitors in the location of their sweet-hearts residing along unknown country roads, without the embarrassing plight it put the already quoted case in, provided only they could read and went on their search, with lantern in hand, or else journeyed before darkness had settled upon the land.

The marking of public buildings and structures, which is quite a common, almost universal, usage, would make an interesting study by itself, or might be included within the scope of this paper, were it not already growing into a disproportionate length. But it offers a rich field and would include such divisions as (1) the naming of our inns and hostelries with their oft interesting, gaily-painted and quaintly-named signs. Of these our county has honored sovereigns of Europe and illustrious statesmen of America, farmers and craftsmen, birds of the air, and fishes, or swimming fowl, of the sea, together with a variety of other local or fancy names in the nomenclature of its hostelries. (2) It would include the naming of its school buildings, from the little red school-house to our academies, ward and city high school buildings and its three or four colleges—the Jonestown Swatara Institute, the Schuylkill Seminary, of Fredericksburg; the Albright College, of Myerstown, and the Lebanon Valley College, of Annville. Among these graven tablets altogether very inter-

esting history may be preserved for future generations. (3) Our many churches furnish another rich class which would add a volume of historical data—if all the plates and names and corner-stone inscriptions would be brought together—a thing easily possible and which, together with photographs of the edifices, should be done by some one. Were these copied, at least three different languages would have to be employed, viz: The German, the English, and the Latin. (4) Still another class of tablets, or markers, are those which the different bridges of the county contain. We have four streams of some consequence in the County, the Mill-creek, the Tulpehocken, the Quittapahilla and the Swatara (both branches), and these are crossed by several dozen bridges, some wooden, some covered or roofed, some of stone or concrete arches, and some built of iron or steel, each and all of which will probably be found with some date stone, or tablet, bearing interesting historical information. Who will do the county the service of locating these and perhaps photographing them and making a transcript of these tablets?

V. MEMORIAL OR TOMB STONE INSCRIPTIONS.

We come to the last division of our general subject, that of memorial or tomb-stone markers. This is at once the richest, the most ancient and the most pathetically interesting and historic portion of the entire subject. It leads to a hundred or more sacred spots of earth—some private plots, many large and well-adorned grounds—such as have inspired poets to write their tenderest elegies, and which we call graveyards, or cemeteries, but which the Germans more appropriately named: *Gottes-Aecker*, i. e. God's-acres. We confess that these spots, where we lay our beloved dead to rest, and deposit their remains as holy seed in the hope and blessed assurance of a glorified resurrection, and where we, too, shall all some day find a lowly couch to sleep in, have for us a strange and many-sided charm. They preach to us of tenderest affection, of hallowed hope and faith, of certain and universal mortality, of bitter, painful partings, of a melancholy-transitiveness of all things earthly,

and yet of the one thing that survives the grave—A Home in the Better Land and Eternal Life with God. So, too, the art displayed in sculpturing and engraving, the natural beauty of lawn and shrubbery and the bloom of fragrant flowers, as well as the sentiment and biographical history that is engraven upon its memorial entablatures hold for us a charm like the pages of some interesting book.

But the field is too large to explore. It can only be outlined here and superficially skimmed. It is not too much to say that the number of our County burial plots, private or family plots, church burial grounds and public cemeteries, must reach considerably above the hundred mark. It would fill a large volume to publish the printed transcripts of all these tombstone markers, but it could be done. It has recently been done in Snyder County by one of its enterprising newspaper men. While there would be much of a monotonous character in its reading, such a volume would prove an unfailing source of help in the study of genealogy and family history.

For our purpose, today, it must suffice to have us say that a classification of graves along certain class lines, of professional or business callings, or else of official position and lives of notoriety and influence would prove of greatest interest to the writer. Besides this the quaintness of epitaphs would have for us the chief attraction and prove of the most intrinsic worth and general interest to a historical society. We wish a complete account might have been made of the instructive and entertaining data which our County graveyards hold. But we can only hint of it and give a few examples.

Where are buried all our illustrious pioneers of Colonial and Revolutionary days, who figured prominently in the first settlements in the laying out of our towns and villages, took active, and some of them, important parts in fighting with the Indians, and those of every war since, or in rearing our churches and schools, or preaching and teaching in them long ago? Where sleep now the old doctors of our earlier ancestors? Where have the professional legal fighters and administrators of justice of a century and more past found at last a tranquil

spot for their bones to rest in peace? And what do the Epitaphs say of them? There is scarcely a churchyard in the county where a preacher or more and a doctor or two and other prominent citizens of the long ago have not found sepulture. Among preachers were some of great note in their day whose dust is mingling with that of this valley. At Tulpehocken sleeps the Elder Leiubachs, Thomas and Charles; at Myers-town Dr. Wolf and others; at Kleinfeltersville Bishop Albright of the Evangelical Association, and at Hebron Bishop Koehler of the Moravian church, and now at Annville Bishop Kephart of the U. B. church. In our city sleep Rev. Dr. Wm. G. Ernst on the Salem Lutheran church yard, and Rev. Drs. J. Conrad Bucher, William Hiester, Ludwig Lupp, Philip Gioninger and F. W. Kremer in the Mt. Tabor churchyard, each having been at one time an honored pastor of the church. On the newer Mt. Lebanon cemetery have been interred quite a number of quondam Lebanon pastors. At the Hill Church burial grounds is found the tomb of that Lutheran pioneer and circuit-rider of Colonial days, Rev. J. Caspar Stoeber. At Annville sleeps Dr. Hiester, Rev. Lewars and others. At Palmyra Rev. L. G. Eggers is entombed. At Jonestown Revs. Stein and Wm. Kurtz are interred, and thus every old cemetery holds the ashes of some shepherd, who once cared for the local flock.

It will be seen thus what a volume of interesting Epitaphs could be collected of our ancient worthies of every walk in life, who sleep their last long sleep in Lebanon County soil. Our local soldiers, some of whom have fallen on the different fields of carnage and been buried there, while others have been brought back to be laid to rest by loving hands in local burial plots, have as far as we know received but sparing honor by the single monument erected to our Civil War heroes in Monument Square, of our city, and by a few martial emblems in the Soldiers' Lot on Mt. Lebanon cemetery. Although this County has furnished its full portion of soldiers in every war of this country, furnished battle grounds and had garrisons upon its soil in the French and Indian War,

and camp or drill grounds in every other war and furnished not a few celebrated soldiers of rank in all these strifes there are no markers to point out these garrison stations or forts, or its drill grounds, tho' the State has been setting up memorial tablets in other parts of its domain. The only monument we have, erected by the Commissioners of the County in the northern portion of the city, marks the temporary camp grounds of several companies of our men, who were waiting to be mustered in as the "Boys in Blue" in the exciting days of 1861. The monument has the following inscription:

In Memory
of the
Soldiers and Sailors
of
Lebanon County
Fallen
in the defense of the
Union

Erected by the
Citizens
of
Lebanon County

Anno Domini
1869

Port Royal—Vicksburg—Fai. Oaks—Fredericksburg—
Wilderness—Chattanooga—Antietam—
Gettysburg.

I will close this-article by citing a few instances of rare, queer or quaint inscriptions found on our County's grave-stones. First of these are specimens of graves, filled by such as suffered death at the hands of Indians. Thus in the Moravian burial grounds of Bechel church is found a tombstone with this epitaph :

John George Mies.
Geb. den 28 Sep.
1739.
Ermordert von
den Wilden den
26 ten Juli 1756
Alt 16 Jahr 9 M₃

Was he an ancient relative of our townsman, then unborn, Dr. J. H. Mease?

A similar stone is found also in the Hebron Moravian cemetery. Following is a transcript :

No. 28
JOHANNES
SPITTLER.
Geb. den 24 Sept. 1708
Ermordet von den
Wilden den
16ten Mai 1757
Alt 37 Jahr 7 M.
3 Pagen.

Doubtless others of like character may be found in other old burial grounds. They are an interesting class of epitaph,

giving us proof indubitable of a few years of storms and soul-stirring times in this then frontier portion of Penn's Wood's, or Great Britian's distant colonies.

Of quaint or sentimental epitaphs another interesting chapter might be written. I will give but a few of these: The same Bethel Moravian churchyard to which we just referred contain graves of a Mr. and (probably) Mrs. Till, whose English epitaphs tell the story of their foreign birth as follows :

Jacob Till

Born March 12, 1713
at Kuhne Wald in
Moravia.

Departed
Jan. 28, 1783.

Rosa Till

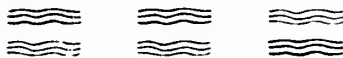
Born Dec. 3, 1721
at Schoenbran in
Silesia

Departed
Jan. 2, 1783.

These are only specimens of scores of a similar character scattered over our most ancient burial grounds

In a Fredericksburg cemetery may be found a grave, whose tomb stone is erected

**“ To the Memory
of
Material W——”**



And in Mt. Zion another showing

“Virgin Mary—”

lay buried in that spot. It is needless to say that neither of these strangely named children lived long upon this terrestrial plane. The former is evidence that the New England Puritan custom of naming children reached even this stronghold of Pennsylvania-Germandom, in that early day, and the latter is proof of the power of a religious sentiment.

In the private plot of the Bucher family, at Rexmont, may be found a brown sand-stone marker, which has puzzled a descendant of the family of our day. The epitaph is composed of several lines of capitals without division, much as a paged page of printing, or as our old spellers would contain pages of disarranged capitals to teach the child observing discrimination. Following is the inscription :

1752

Here Lieth the Body
of Jemime Mary

On a little examination, however, it will be observed that the above spells the following: "Here lieth the body of Jemime Mary." She was doubtless a *capital* child to her fond parents.

I am now turning to my 49th page of manuscript, and it frightens me, as the prolixity must have wearied you, my readers. Lest I make a half-century run, I will, by yet acknowledging my indebtedness to Dr. E. Grumblne, of Mt. Zion; Rev. H. J. Welker, of Tulpehocken Reformed church; Mr. C. Bucher, of Schaefferstown; Mr. M. W. Scharff, of Stouchsburg; Dr. S. P. Heilman, of Heilman Dale; Dr. W. M. Gullford and Mr. John Zartman, of this city, for help received, beat a hasty retreat and bring my musings and scribblings to an abrupt close.

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